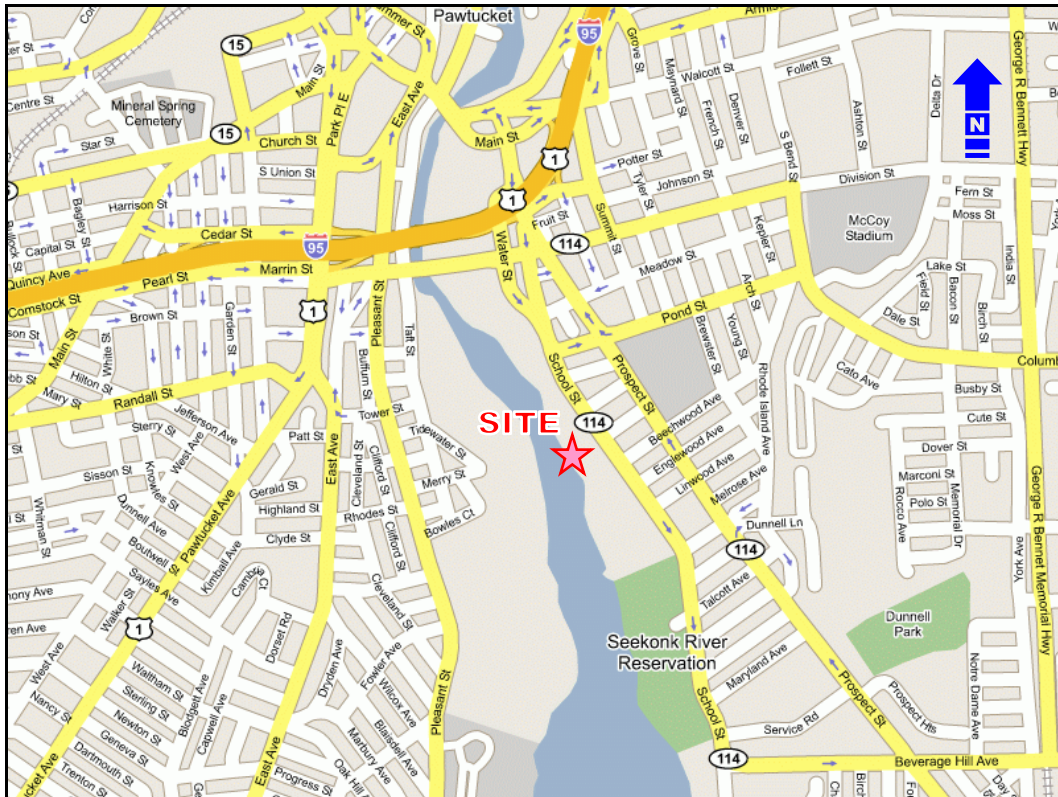


Site No. 1

FORMER STATE PIER #2

Pawtucket
Tim Healey Way via School Street



FORMER STATE PIER #2

Site Description

Former State Pier #2 is sited directly off of School Street (Route 114 South) along the easterly shoreline of the Seekonk River in Pawtucket. The site is accessed via Tim Healey Way, a cobblestone switchback road which also provides access to an assisted living home and a Pawtucket Water Supply facility. Owned by the City of Pawtucket, the site is characterized by a long bulkhead frontage along the river, a large unimproved parking area, and a public boat launch. In addition to fishing, popular activities at the site include boating, picnicking, sightseeing, and general recreation. The area is also used occasionally for recreational festivals including the annual Dragon Boat Races / Asian Festival.

Location Assessment

Bay Location. Located near the upper tidal reach of the Seekonk River (approximately ½ mile downstream from the Blackstone River / Pawtucket Falls), waters in the vicinity of this site do not meet aquatic life support criteria. Causes for water quality impairment include low oxygen concentration, excessive algal growth, presence of viral and bacterial pathogens, and nutrient enrichment. These waters are classified as SB1(a) and are likely impacted by pathogens from approved wastewater discharges and combined sewer overflows. These waters are also permanently closed to shellfishing (see Appendix B). From the Online Recreational Fishing Survey, typical catch within the Seekonk River consists almost exclusively of Striped Bass and Bluefish, both indicated as present spring through fall. While the relatively poor water quality may also detract from site aesthetics, anglers interviewed during site visits were generally satisfied with the quality of fishing offered at the site.

Other water uses in the upper Seekonk River consist primarily of small-craft boating, kayaking, and rowing by the Brown University crew teams. While the narrow width of the river at the site could potentially result in conflicts between fishing and the above uses, the minimal volume of water traffic at this location along the Seekonk River is such that they do not currently conflict.

Land Location. The site is located in an urbanized area of mostly residential and institutional uses. Memorial Hospital is located approximately ¼ mile east of the site, and surrounding neighborhoods are predominantly residential. Facilities in the immediate vicinity of the site consist of an assisted living home and a Pawtucket Water Supply facility along Tim Healey Way, neither of which appear to conflict with site uses. The site's proximity to Interstate Route 95 and the Greater Providence population center offer accessibility to a potentially large user base.

The site itself currently serves as a multipurpose recreational area and is a popular evening gathering spot for parking, relaxation, meeting with friends, enjoying the sunset, etc., particularly during summer months. These uses generally complement the activities of fishing and boating at the site, as many anglers frequent the site as much for this atmosphere as for the quality of fishing.

Environmental Constraints and Permitting. This area of the Seekonk River is classified by the CRMC as Type 4 (Multipurpose) waters. The parking area and pavement extend to the edge of the river, and the inland edge of coastal feature for this site is the top of bulkhead. Emergent and/or submergent vegetation (including eelgrass) are not present in this location. This area is also included within the CRMC Providence River Special Area Management Plan.

Facilities Assessment

The former State Pier #2 bulkhead provides ample frontage (over 300 feet) along the Seekonk River which easily accommodates the current level of fishing use. Several anglers at the site noted that they enjoy being able to park directly along the bulkhead at the fishing spot. The narrow width of the river at this location also makes for an easy cast to the relatively deeper waters of the center channel. The primary deficiency of the fishing infrastructure is the lack of railing along the length of the bulkhead, both in terms of safety (preventing wheelchairs, vehicles, persons, etc. from entering the water) and as a desired fishing amenity (for supporting fishing rods, etc.).

The parking and recreation areas do not appear to have been improved or maintained for some time, and site aesthetics are generally poor, however frequent visitors of the site indicated that they nonetheless prefer the site "as is". A few trash receptacles are dispersed within the lot, which is kept clean and maintained by the site's local fishing club.

While in poor condition, the large, partially-paved parking area offers more than ample parking for current site uses. The cobblestone surface of Tim Healey Way is in good condition and functions well in inhibiting motor vehicle speeds along the switchback road.

Though not posted, visitors of the site indicated that it is generally closed from sunset to sunrise. The site is readily accessible by foot, bicycle, and public transit, though according to frequent visitors the lack of safety railing hinders enjoyment of the site by persons with disabilities (this is particularly applicable to residents of the assisted living home).

Existing Site Conditions

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
<i>Existing Fishing Facilities</i>			X	
<i>Parking</i>			X	
<i>Compatibility with Surrounding Land / Water Uses</i>			X	
<i>Statewide Transportation Accessibility / Public Transit</i>			X	
<i>Site Aesthetics</i>		X		
	Low	Medium	High	
<i>Water Quality (see Appendix B)</i>	X			

Priority for Capital Improvements: Low

In most respects the Former State Pier #2 site currently functions well as a shoreline public fishing access site: it is easily accessible, offers ample landside area and bulkhead frontage to support fishing and other uses, and the current user base is generally satisfied with the site's facilities. The overriding detriment to the site however is its location along the uppermost reach of Narragansett Bay tidal waters, which rates lowest of all evaluation sites in terms of water

quality and species diversity parameters. While the site could benefit from parking, landscaping, and safety improvements within the landside parcel, there is no need for further development of fishing access structure. Recognizing the inherent limitations of the fishing offered by these waters, the long bulkhead is in good condition and currently provides quality, high capacity fishing access along this narrow stretch of the Seekonk River.

The Pawtucket Department of Planning and Redevelopment was contacted regarding the Former State Pier #2 site. While only in the preliminary planning stages, staff indicated that the City of Pawtucket intends to maintain and redevelop the site as a public access location (for fishing, boating, and general recreation) as part of its comprehensive plan. While capital investment in improvements to the site by the RIDEM appears unnecessary, coordination between the City and the RIDEM would be beneficial in determining the appropriate scope and scale of future redevelopment at this location.



Photo 1. Entrance to access road (Tim Healey Way) from School Street looking south.



Photo 2. Cobblestone road surface of Tim Healey Way looking south. The Assisted living home is visible on the left. Access to the site is provided via a “switchback” in this road.



Photo 3. Entrance to site from Tim Healey Way looking northwest.



Photo 4. Site lot looking south from north end.



Photo 5. Boat launch and dock at north end of lot looking west.



Photo 6. Bulkhead along the Seekonk River looking north from south end of site.



Photo 7. Parking and recreation area at south end of lot.



Photos 8A and 8B. Existing recreation features, including barbecue area and picnic benches.